

specific identification was based upon its size, structure, vent colour and crested head.

Britton (1969) recorded the incidence of albinism in the ornithological collection of the National Museum, Nairobi, and in the birds that he had handled during netting (primarily for ringing) in Kenya. He noted that Common Bulbuls show a higher incidence of partial/total albinism than the other species he examined, and this point is supported by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) and McLachlan & Liversidge (1978), who mention the phenomenon in this species.

Three leucistic Common Bulbuls from Kenya in the collection of the National Museum, Nairobi, show lesser development of albinism than the Thika bird and, in over nine years of familiarity with this species in several countries, I have never seen it display pigment loss so strikingly.

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EASTERN-BEARDED SCRUB ROBIN *CERCOTRICHAS QUADRIVIRGATA* BATHING IN A TREE HOLE

During the early morning of 19 December 1982 I was sitting in the Pugu Hills forest near Dar es Salaam observing territorial behaviour of the East Coast Akalat *Sheppardia gunningi*.

During a lull in akalat activity I was attracted to a fluttering movement some 20m from where I sat. Careful positioning gave me excellent views of an Eastern Bearded Scrub Robin sitting at the entrance to a hole about a metre above the ground in the bole of a small tree. The bird fluffed out its breast feathers, spread its wings as far as practical and lowered itself backwards into the hole. While this was suggestive of brooding, I was surprised at the choice of nest site and even more puzzled when, after a minute or two, it jumped out on to the lip of the hole. It immediately began shaking and preening before again returning backwards into the hole. Using binoculars and with an increase in ambient light, I could make out quite energetic movements inside the hole. Within a minute or two it again jumped to the lip of the hole and continued preening. I was convinced that the bird had not seen me and its behaviour was completely natural. This was confirmed when the akalat returned and my movement disturbed the scrub robin, which flew away giving its alarm note.

An inspection of the hole several minutes later revealed it to be a rot hole with a distinct lower lip. Water had collected in the hole and was evidently being used for bathing.

The Pugu Hills forest is situated at the northeastern tip of a range of low hills running northeast and petering out only 15 km from Dar es Salaam and the sea. Although the forest receives more rain than the surrounding coastal plain, the surface soil is rather sandy and few puddles are left after even heavy rain showers. The nearest permanent water is 600 m away and outside the forest. It seems likely that the use of suitable tree holes for bathing is a regular occurrence among forest birds in such habitats. A search through available literature failed to trace a similar habit among this or related species.

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FURTHER RECORDS OF THE WHITE-THROATED FORM OF THE
PIED WHEATEAR *OENANTHE PLESCHANKA* FROM KENYA

Pearson & Backhurst (1979) recorded two occurrences of the rare white-throated form of the Pied Wheatear from southern Kenya; these were apparently the first records of this morph in the Afrotropical region. As a result of researches associated with the Kenyan bird atlas scheme (Lewis & Pomeroy in prep.), the following further records of this form have been reported from Kenya by D.J. Pearson and P.J. Squelch:

1 adult male by the Morun River, just below the Marich Pass (1.32N, 35.27E) on 15 February 1981 (PJS)

1 first year male at Kariobangi Sewage Farm, Nairobi from 9 to 12 February 1982 (DJP)

1 adult male at 3.15N, 35.28E on the Lodwar-Lokitaung road on 13 December 1982 (PJS).

The descriptions submitted in support of the two records from northern Kenya stress the black lores and ear coverts which contrasted strongly with the silver-grey crown and nape, and with the white throat. The black mantles of these birds distinguished them from the similar white-throated form of the Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica* and, at this time of year, denoted that both birds were adult. While the 1981 bird was white from chin to vent, the 1982 individual had the diffuse rufous breast band often shown by this species (D.J. Pearson pers. comm.).

The plumage of the Kariobangi individual was identical to that of the similarly aged birds described by Pearson & Backhurst (1979).

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